24.

A

COLLECTION

OF SUNDRY

PETITIONS

PRESENTED

To the Kings moſt Excellent Majeſty.

AS ALSO,

To the two moſt Honourable HOUSES, now Aſſembled in

PARLIAMENT.

AND

Others already Signed, by moſt of the *Gentry*, *Miniſters* and *Free-holders* of ſeveral Counties. In behalf of *Epiſcopacy*, *Lyturgy*, Rights of the Crown, and Liberty of the Subject.

In Oppoſition to,

Popery, Presbytery, Anarchy and Confuſion.

Occaſioned by the many Libellous Petitions, then ſecretly ſet on Foot both againſt Church and State.

Printed and Publiſhed by the Kings ſpecial Command, in the Year 1642. and now again publiſh'd to precaution the ill-meaning Zealots of this Age.

LONDON,

Printed, and are to be ſold by *Walter Davis* in *Amen-Corner*. 1681.

Charles R.

OUr Will and Command is, and We doe hereby authoriſe you forthwith to Print, Publiſh and diſperſe, a Certain Book, Entituled, *A. Collection of the Petitions of divers Counties of this our Kingdome Subſcribed by the* Gentry, Miniſters, *and* Freeholders *of thoſe Counties in behalf of* Epiſcopacy, *the* Lyturgie *and* Church Goverment, *and for the eſtabliſhing our Rights, and Liberty of the Subject.* And for ſo doing, This ſhall be your Warrant.

Given at our Court at York the 20th. of May, 1642.

The Collector to the Reader.

READER,

LET me put thee in minde (as these times do me) of a special Law in (that singular pattern of a well composed State Sparta. So sensible were they of the ill effects of Innovasions in Government, that who ever proposed anew Law, presented himself with a Halter about his neck, his Head paid the Trespasse of a new invented Prejudice. But Oh! Quantum mutantnr Tempora, quantum nos, So rare agift have the illuminated fancies of this allknowing Age, That old women without Spectacles can discover popish plots, young men and prentizes assume to regulate the Rebellion iu Ireland Sea men and Marriners reform the house of Peers; poore-men, porters and labourers, spy out a malignant party and discipline them; The countrey clouted shoe renew the decayed trade of the City The cobler patch up a Religion, and all these petition for a translation, both of Church & State, with so little fear of the halter, that they would think themselves neglected if they had not thanks for their care of the Republick: only he that desires the ratification of an old Law, or of a long setled Eccelsiastick Government looks as if the Halter were his share; And though there be thirty thousand hands subscribed to it; 'Tis ods, not one of all these dares prefer a Petition to that purpose: Oh! Quis pudor quod non præstet infidelitas Oh! what a shame is it, an ignorant Separatist shall covertly draw Supscribers out of blind zeal to loose papers, and those to be annext to some Embryon yet unhatcht, and delivered in the name of a County with confidence, when a Knight of a shire shall perhaps smother the true child and dares not own it. That a few innovasions shall be able to summon to Black heath, Southwarke, and Saint-Georg's Fields, thousands of credulous people, with implicite faiths, to go along with Petitions shall be shewed them when they come there, for the alteration of laws and Govcrnment: and the resolutions of an assizes or Sessions of Justices, published in all Parishes, signed by all the free holders of a County, for the supportation of Laws and Government, shall not produce one Patriot to present the unanimous desires of a County: yet it falls out often so when single hearted men are encounter'd by a faction, each man thinks he stands alone unassured of a second, when ten of the other confederated make more noyse then 10000 silent men. Episcopacy and Lyturgie are both legally planted, at this time both violently assaulted: The question is, whether the battery, or the defence be the stronger, the one side charges furiously; the other suffers silently, patiently, and a reserved strength oft masters a violent: But each Orthodox son of the Church thinks himself in Eliahs case, that he alone is left of all the prophets, and alas, what can he do? And perhaps thou my Reader art one of those, Courage man; the same God that taught him to know he had reserved seven thousand, that had never bowed their knees to Baal, when he opens thy eyes can shew the not seven, but seventy time seven thousand true Protestants, that will lend their hands and hearts to uphold that apostolick order, this blessed forme of Divine Service. The business is, 'tis a hard time, every man's afraid to break his shins by being foremost: But the Ice is broke already. This Collection of these many sleeping Petitions will shew every County that the way is open And since noise and nnmber are taken into consideration, the forwardnesse of the Assaylants will I beleeve, put shame upon the Defendants to be so far behind. The Judges being honourable, and impartially receiving the arguments on both sides, I presume none will discover a distrust of a fair acceptance, or betray a Trust (out of a personall respect) by detayning such petitions as the Counties have commited into their hands. If all such as are already signed see the light, Iam sure this volume will be a large one, and the number, and quality of the defendants as much over-sway the oponents; as their arguments drawn from the Laws of God and man, will out weigh the Motives of those, who only will, because they will. As if it were cause enough to overthrow established laws, that they have desired it, though they shew no reason for it: But if all other Counties, all true Protestants with like liberty expresse their affections, the distractions of the Church will be quickly setled; To that good work I have lent my hand by lending thee and the world this light.

Farewell.

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A PETITION DELIVERED

In to the LORDS SPIRITUAL and TEMPORAL.

By Sir THOMAS ASTON *Baronet*, from the County *Palatine* of *Cheſter* concerning EPISCOPACY.

To the HIGH and HONORABLE COURT of PARLIAMENT.

The Nobility, Knights, Gentry, Miniſters, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the County Palatine *of* Cheſter, *whoſe names are ſubſcribed in the ſeveral Schedules hereunto annexed.*

Humbly ſhew;

THat whereas divers Petitions have lately been carried about this County, againſt the preſent form of Church-government (and the hands of many perſons of ordinary quality ſolicited to the ſame, with pretence to be preſented to this Honorable Aſſembly) which we conceiving not ſo much to aim at Reformation, as abſolute Innovation of Government, and ſuch as muſt give a great advantage to the Adverſaries of our Religion, we held it our duty to diſavow them all.

And humby pray, that we incurre no miſcenſure, if any ſuch clamors have (without our privity) aſſum'd the name of the County.

We, as others, are ſenſible of the common grievances of the Kingdom, and have juſt cauſe to rejoyce at, and acknowledge with thankfulneſs, the pious care which is already taken for the ſuppreſſing of the growth of Popery, the better ſupply of able Miniſters, and the removing of all Innovation: and we doubt not, but in your great wiſdoms you will regulate the rigor of Eccleſiaſtical Courts, to ſuit with the temper of our Laws, and the nature of Free-men.

Yet when we conſider, that Biſhops were inſtituted in the time of the Apoſtles; That they were the great lights of the Church in all the firſt general Counſels; that ſo many of them ſow'd the ſeeds of religion in their bloods, and reſcued Chriſtianity from utter extirpation in the Primitive Heathen perſecutions; that to them we owe the redemption of the purity of the Goſpel, we now profeſs from *Romiſh* corruption; that many of them for the propagation of the truth, became ſuch glorious Martyrs; that divers of them (lately and) yet living with us, have been ſo great aſſertors of our religion againſt its common enemy of *Rome*; and that their Government hath been ſo long approved, ſo oft eſtabliſhed by the Common and Statute-laws of this Kingdom; and as yet nothing in their Doctrine (generally taught) diſſonant from the word of God, or the Articles ratified by Law. In this caſe to call their Government, a perpetual Vaſſalage, an intollerable Bondage; And (*prima facie & in audita altera parte*) to pray the preſent removal of them, or (as in ſome of their Petitions) to ſeek the utter diſſolution and ruin of their offices (as Antichriſtian) we cannot conceive to reliſh of juſtice or charity, nor can we joyn with them.

But on the contrary, when we conſider the tenour of ſuch writings, as in the name of Petitions, are ſpread amongſt the common people; the tenents preached publickly in Pulpits, and the contents of many printed Pamphlets, ſwarming amongſt us; all of them dangerouſly exciting a diſobedience to the eſtabliſhed form of Government, and their ſeverall intimations of the deſire of the power of the keys, and that their congregations may execute Eccleſiaſtical cenſures within themſelves, we cannot but expres our juſt fears, that their deſire is to introduce an abſolute innovation of Presbyterial Government, whereby we who are now governed by the Canon and Civill Laws, diſpenſed by twenty-ſix ordinaries (eaſily reſponſal to Parliaments for any deviation from the rule of law) conceive we ſhould becom expo'ed to the meer arbitrary government of a numerous Presbytery, who together with their ruling Elders, will ariſe to near forty thouſand Church Governors, and with their adherents, muſt needs bear ſo great a ſway in the Common wealth, that if future inconvenience ſhall be found in that Government, we humbly offer to conſideration, how the'e ſhall be reducibly by Parliaments, how conſiſtent with a Monarchy, and how dangerouſly conducible to an Anarchy, which wee have juſt cauſe to pray againſt, as fearing the conſequences would prove the utter loſs of Learning and Laws, which muſt neceſſarily produce an extermination of Nobility, Gentry, and Order, if not of Religon.

With what vehemency of Spirit, theſe things are proſecuted, and how plauſibly ſuch popular infuſions ſpread as incline to a parity, we held it our duty to repreſent to this Honourable aſſembly; And humbly pray, That ſome ſuch preſent courſe be taken, as in your Wiſdome ſhall be thought fit to ſuppreſs the future diſperſing of ſuch dangerous diſcontents amongſt the Common-people. We having great cauſe to fear, that of all the diſtempers that at preſent threa-

ten the wel-fare of the State, there is none worthy the mature and grave conſideration of this Honourable aſſembly, then to ſtop to the Torrent of ſuch ſpirits before they ſwell beyond the bounds of Government; Then we doubt not but his Majeſty Perſevering in his gracious inclination to hear the complaints and relieve the grievances of the Subjects in frequent Parliaments, it will ſo unite the Head and the body, ſo indiſſolubly cement the affections of his people to our Royal Soveraign, that without any other change of Government. He can never want revenue, nor we juſtice.

We have preſumed to annex a Copy of a Petition (or Libell) diſperſed, and certain poſitions preacht in this County, which we conceive imply matter of dangerous conſequence to the peace of the Church and State. All which we humbly ſubmit to your great Judgments, praying they may be read.

And ſhall ever pray.

Subſcribed to this Petition.

Four Noblemen.
Knight Baronets, Knights and Eſquires, fourſcore and odd.
Divines threeſcore and ten.
Gentlemen three hundred and odd.
Freholders, and other Inhabitants, above ſix thouſand.
All of the ſame County.

To the High and Honourable Court of *PARLIAMENT:*

The humble Petition of the Univerſity of OXFORD.

Sheweth,

That whereas the Univerſity hath been informed of ſeveral Petitions concerning the preſent Government of this Church and maintenance of the Clergy, which have of late been exhibited to this Honorable Aſſembly; We could not but think our ſelves bound in duty to God, and this whole Nation charity to our ſelves and Succeſſors, who have, and are like to have more than ordinary intereſt in any reſolution that ſhall be taken concerning Church affairs, in all humility, to deſire the continuance of that form of Government, which is now eſtabliſhed here, and hath been preſerved in ſome of the Eaſtern and Weſtern Churches, in a continued Succeſſion of *Biſhops*, down from the very Apoſtles to this preſent time; the like whereof cannot be affirmed of any other form of Government in any Church. Upon which conſideration, and ſuch other motives as have been already repreſented to this Honorable Parliament from other Perſons and places (with whom we concurre) in behalf of *Epiſcopacy*. We earneſtly deſire, that you would protect that ancient and *Apoſtolical Order* from ruin or diminution.

And become further Suiters for the continuance of thoſe pious Foundations of *Cathedral Churches*, with their Lands and Revenues.

As Dedicate to the Service and Honor of God, ſoon after the Plantation of Chriſtianity in the *Engliſh Nation*.

As thought fit and uſeful to be preſerved for that end, when the Nurſeries of Superſtition were demoliſhed, and ſo continued in the laſt and beſt times, ſince the bleſſed Reformation under King *Edward* the 6th, Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *James*, Princes renowned through the World for their piety and wiſdom.

As approved and confirmed by the Laws of this Land, ancient and modern:

As the principal outward motive and encouragement of all Students, eſpecially in Divinity, and the fitteſt reward of ſome deep and eminent Schollars.

As producing or nouriſhing in all ages, many godly and learned Men, who have moſt ſtrongly aſſerted the truth of that Religion we profeſs, againſt the many fierce oppoſitions of our adverſaries of *Rome*.

As affording a competent portion in an ingenuous way to many younger Brothers of good Parentage, who devote themſelves to the miniſtery of the Goſpel.

As the only means of ſubſiſtence to a multitude of Officers and other Miniſters, who with their Families depend upon them, and are wholly maintained by them.

As the main authors or upholders of diverſe Schooles, Hoſpitals, High-ways, Bridges, and other publick and pious Workes:

As ſpecial cauſes of much profit and advantage to thoſe Cities where they are ſcituate, not only by relieving their poor and keeping convenient Hoſpitality, but by occaſioning a frequent reſort of Strangers from other parts, to the great benefit of all Tradeſmen, and Inhabitants in thoſe places.

As the goodly Monuments of our Predeceſſors Piety, and preſent Honor of this Kingdom in the eye of Forraign Nations.

As the chief ſupport of many thouſand Families of the Laity, who enjoy fair Eſtates from them in a free way.

As yielding a conſtant and ample revenue to the Crown:

And as by which many of the learned *Profeſſors* in our *Vniverſity* are maintained.

The ſubverſion or alienation whereof muſt (as we conceive) not only be attended with ſuch conſequences, as will redound to the ſcandal of many well affected to our Religion, but open the mouths of our adverſaries, and of Poſterity againſt us, and is likely in time to draw after it harder conditions upon a conſiderable part of the Laity, and univerſal cheapneſs and contempt upon the Clergy, a lamentable drooping and defection of induſtry and knowledge in the *Vniverſities*; which is eaſie to foreſee, but will be hard to remedy.

May it therefore pleaſe this Honorably Aſſembly, *upon theſe and ſuch other Conſiderations as your great Wiſdoms ſhall ſuggeſt, to take ſuch pious care for the continuance of theſe* Religious Houſes, *and their Revenues, according to the beſt intentions of their* Founders, *as may be to the moſt furtherance of Gods glory and ſervice, the Honor of this Church and Nation, the advancement of* Religion *and* Learning, *the encouragement of the modeſt hopes & honeſt endeavors of many hundred* Students *in the* Univerſities.

Who do and ſhall ever pray &c.

Dat: Anno Dom. *Milleſſimo ſexcent. quad. primo è Domo Convocationis, in celebri Conventu Doctorum ac Magiſtrorum, omnibus & ſingulis aſſentientibus.*

Honoratiſſimis viris Equitibus, Civibus Burgenſibus Supremæ Curiæ Parliamentiæ

SENATORIBUS Conſultiſſimis

Summa cum Demiſſione.

Senatores Honoratiſſimi,

NOn veremur ne voluentibus tanta negotia moleſti ſimus Academia Cantabrigienſis, *cum nihil ſit aut ad* Religionem *certius, aut ad ſplendorem nominis excelſius, quam ſuſcipere* Literarum *clientelam. In quo ſtudio, cum ſingularis animi veſtri propenſio ſemper elaxerit, tum nulla in re magis poſſit eminere, quam ſi* Eccleſiæ *honeſtamenta ea quæ ſub* optimis Regibus *tam diu obtinuerunt, indelibata tueamini.*

Non enim agitur unius Academiæ, *non unius ætatis cauſa, nam nec induſtria poterit non relangueſcere; nec bona indoles ali, atque augeri, nec vota parentum non in irritum cadere, niſi ſpe non vana ſuffulciantur. Quam præmaturum putemus bonis artibus occaſum imminere ſi ſtipendium idem* Militi *ſit quòd* Imperatori? *Sunt qui expediendis* Scholaſticorum *ambagibus, evolvendis antiquorum* Patrum *monumentis, expurgandæ* feci Romanæ, *velut* Augiæ Stabulo, *ſe totus impenderunt, nec aliam mercedem prenſant, quam in* Eccleſia Cathedrali *tandem aliquando quaſi in portu conquieſcere, it à fit, ut quod ignavis* Asylum incitiæ *eſt, id candidioribus ingeniis* pro ſtimulo *ſit at optima perſequenda, nec æquitas judiciorum veſtrorum ferret, improbitatem nonnullorum in publicam calamitatem redundare.* Impetigo Romana *quam amplam tum ſibi nacta videbitur ſe diffundendi materiam, cùm non ſit niſi imbelles adverſarios habitura? neque enim certamini, vacare poſſunt, qui id unice agunt, ut in* roſtris concionibus *ſudent; etiam num percentiſcere nobis videmur undam atque inanem* Academiam, *& antiquam paupertatem quaſi præludio perhorreſcimus: nec veſtra progenies non aliquando ventura eſt in tantarum miſeriarum partes.* Quum itaque Senatores Ampliſſimi per ſpes Parentum, per illecebras induſtriæ, per ſubſidia ſimul & ornamenta dictatis, per vincula, nervos, & firmamenta Literarum, velitis ſplendorem Eccleſiæ, qui longiſſimis ab uſque temporibus, ad noſtra tempora deductus eſt, authoritate veſtra communire. *Sed quia Lingua nativa dolores & deſideria ſua felicius exprimit, annexam* Literis Petitionem *benevolis auribus excipitis.*

Honori veſtro Deditiſſimi

Procancellarius, rel quuſque cœtus
Academiæ CANTABRIGIENSIS

Datæ è frequenti conventu noſtro *Cantabr.*
tertio Idus Aprilis 1641.

Lecta 12. *Maii* 1641.

To the Honorable the Knights Citizens, and Burgeſſes of the Houſe of *Commons* aſſembled in *Parliament*.

The humble Petition of the Univerſity *of* CAMBRIDGE

Sheweth,

THat your *Petitioners* have heard of divers ſuggeſtions offered to this *Honorable Court* by way of Remonſtrance, tending to the ſubverſion of *Cathedral Churches*, & alienation of thoſe *Lands* by which they are ſupported, being the ancient Inheritance of the *Church*, Founded and beſtowed by the Religious bounty of many *Famous and renowned Kings and Princes of the Land*, & other *Benefactors*, both of the *Clergy and Laity*, and eſtabliſhed and confirmed unto them by the *Laws* of this *Kingdom*, & ſo accordingly have been employed to the advancement of *Learning*, the encouragement of *Students*, and preferment of *Learned men*, beſides many other pious and charitable *Uſes*.

May it pleaſe this *Honorable Court*, out of their great Wiſdom and tender care for the cherriſhing of *Learning*, and furtherance of the *Studies*, and pains of thoſe who have, and do devote themſelves to the ſervice of the Church, graciouſly to protect, and ſecure thoſe *Religious Foundations* from ruin, and Alienation; and withal to take order that they may be reduc'd to the due obſervations of their *Statutes*, and that all *Innovations* and *Abuſes*, which have by ſome mens miſcarriages crept in, may be reformed, that ſo the *Students* of our *Univerſity*, which by the preſent fears, both are, and will be much ſadded and dejected, may be the better invited to purſue their *Studies* with alacrity, and the places themſelves diſpoſed to the moſt ſerviceable and deſerving men; according to their firſt Inſtitution.

And your Petitioners as in duty bound ſhall ever pray, &c.

To the Honorable Houſe of *Commons* now Aſſembled in the High Court of *Parliament*.

The moſt humble Petition of the Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, and Commons within the County of Notingham.

Humbly ſhewing,

THat whereas we are informed, that a Petition, together with a Remonſtrance, hath in the name of this County, been heretofore preſented to this Honorable Houſe, for the alterations in Church-Government.

We do humbly crave leave to certifie your honors, that the ſame was done without our knowledg, or conſent, and that we do hereby diſ-avow the ſame. And with the like humility, do deſire, that the long eſtabliſhed Government of the Church may ſtill continue, and that the abuſes and errors of ſome particular perſons may not cauſe the alteration of the antient Government; but rather that, ſuch perſons ſhould ſuffer according to their Demerits. And we likewiſe humbly crave, the *Book of Common Prayer*, by Law eſtabliſhed, may continue in force, with ſuch alteration (if there be cauſe) as to your Honors Wiſdoms ſhall ſeem meet.

And as in duty bound, we ſhall daily pray, &c.

Subſcribed by one Viſcount, five Knights, above a hundred Gentlemen of quality, all the Clergy of the County, and above ſix thouſand Commoners, being all of them Communicants.

The Remonſtrance and Petition of the County of *Huntington*, the Knights, Gentlemen, Clergy, Free-holders, and Inhabitants.

To the Right Honorable the Lords, and Commons aſſembled in Parliament for the continuance of the *Church Government* and *Divine Service*, or book of *Common-Prayer*.

Preſented to the houſe of Peers by the Lord Privy Seal the 8. *of* December, 1641.

We humbly ſhew,

THat whereas many attempts have been practiſed, and divers Petitions from ſeveral Counties, and other places within this Kingdome, framed and penned in a cloſe and ſubtile manner, to import more than is firſt diſcernable by any ordinary eye, or that was imparted to thoſe who ſigned the ſame, have been carried about to moſt places againſt the preſent forme and frame of Church-Government, and Divine-ſervice, or Common Prayers, and the hands of many perſons of ordinary quality ſolli-

cited

cited to the ſame, with pretence to be preſented to this honourable aſſembly in Parliament, and under colour of removing ſome Innovations lately crept into the Church, and worſhip of God, and reforming ſome abuſes in the Eccleſiaſtical Courts, which we conceiving and fearing not ſo much to aime at the taking away of the ſaid innovations, and reformation of abuſes, as tending to an abſolute Innovation of Church Government, and ſubverſion of that Order and forme of Divine-Service, which hath happily continued amongſt us ever ſince the Reformation of Religion: Out of a tender and zealous regard hereunto, we have thought it our duty, not only to diſavow all ſuch Petitions, but alſo to manifeſt our publick affections, and deſires to continue the Forme of Divine-Service, and Common Prayers, and the preſent Government of the Church, as the ſame hath been continued ſince the firſt Reformation, and ſtand ſo eſtabliſhed by the Laws and Statutes of this Kingdome.

For when we conſider that the forme of Divine-Service expreſſed and contained in the book of Common-Prayer, was with great care, piety and ſincerity, reviſed and reduced from all former corruptions and Romiſh Superſtitions, by thoſe holy and ſelected Inſtruments of the reformation of Religion within this Church, and was by them reſtored to its firſt purity, according as it was inſtituted and practiſed in the primitive times ſtandeth confirmed, eſtabliſhed, and enjoyned by Act of Parliament and Royal Injunctionss and hath ever ſince had the general approbation of the godly, and a publick uſe and continuance within this Church. And that Biſhops were inſtituted, and have had their being and continuance ever ſince the firſt planting of Chriſtian Religion amongſt us, and the reſt of the Chriſtian World, that they were the lights and Glorious Lamps of Gods Church, that ſo many of them ſowed the ſeeds of Chriſtian Religion in their blouds, which they willingly powred out therefore, that by them Chriſtianity was reſcued and preſerved from utter extirpation in the fierce and moſt cruel Perſecutions of Pagan Emperours, that to them we owe the Redemption of the purity of the Goſpel, and the Reformation of the Religion we now profeſs, from Romiſh corruption, that many of them for the propagation of the Truth became glorious Martyrs, leaving unto us an holy example, and an honourable remembrance of their faith and Chriſtian fortitude, that divers of them lately and yet living with us, have been ſo great aſſertours and Champions of our Religion againſt the Common enemy of Rome, and that their Government hath been ſo antient, ſo long approved, and ſo often eſtabliſhed by the Lawes and Statutes of this Kingdome, and as yet nothing in their Doctrine (generally taught) diſſonant from the Word of God, or the Articles eſtabliſhed by Law, and that moſt of them are of ſingular learning and piety. In this caſe to Call the forme of Divine-Service and Common-Prayer Erronious, Popiſh, Superſtitious, Idolatrous, and Blaſphemous, and to call the Government by Biſhops, a perpetual vaſſallage, and intollerable bondage, and at the firſt ſtep, and before the parties concerned be heard to pray the preſent removall of them, or the utter diſſolution and extirpation of them, their Courts and their Officers, as Antichriſtian and Diabolical, we cannot conceive to ſavour or reliſh of piety, juſtice, or charity, nor can we joyn with them herein, but rather humbly pray a reformation of the abuſes, and puniſhment of the Offenders, but not the ruine or abolition of the Innocent.

Now on the contrary, when we conſider the tenour of ſuch writings, as in the name of Petitions are ſpread amongſt the Common people, the contents of many printed Pamphlets ſwarming at London, and over all the Counties, the Sermons preached publickly in Pulpits, and other private places, and the bitter invectives divulged, and commonly ſpoken by many diſaffected perſons, all of them ſhewing an extreme averſeneſs and diſlike of the preſent Government of the Church, and Divine Service, or Common Prayers; dangerouſly exciting a diſobedience to the eſtabliſhed form of Government and Church Service, their ſeveral intimations of the deſire of the power of the keyes, and that their congregations may be independent, and may execute Eccleſiaſtical cenſures within themſelves whereby many ſects, and ſeveral and contrary opinions will ſoon grow and ariſe, whereby great diviſions and horrible factions will ſoon enſue thereupon, to the breach of that unſon, which is the ſacred band and preſervation of the Common peace of Church and State: their peremtory deſires and bold aſſuming to themſelves the liberty of conſcience to introduce into the Church whatſoever they affect, and to refuſe and oppoſe all things which themſelves ſhall diſlike, and what they diſlike muſt not only to themſelves, but alſo to all others be ſcandalous and burdenſome, and muſt be cried out upon, as great and unſupportable grievances, yea though the things in themſelves, be never ſo indifferent, of never ſo long continuance in uſe and practice, and never ſo much deſired and affected of others, ſo that where three or four of them be in a pariſh, though five hundred others deſire the uſe and continuance of things long uſed, all muſt be altered or taken away as ſcandals and greivances for theſe three or four, though to the offence of many others, and whatſoever they will have introduced, muſt be impoſed upon all others, and muſt by all be admitted without ſcandal or offence, whereby multitudes of godly and wel-affected people are in ſome things deprived or abridged of what they deſire and take comfort in, and have had a long and lawful uſe and practiſe of, and other things impoſed upon them againſt their wills and liking, as if no accompt were to be made of them, or no liberty of conſcience were left unto them: which bold attempts of ſome few to arrogate to themſelves, and to exerciſe over all others, what high preſumption is it? and how great a tyranny may it prove over the minds and conſciences of men? The great increaſe of late of Schiſmaticks and

Sectaries, and of persons not only separating and sequestring themselves from the publick Assembly at Common Prayer *and* Divine Service, *but also opposing, and tumultuously interrupting others in the performance thereof in the publick Congregation, the frequent and many Conventicles held amongst them, and their often meetings at all publick conventions of Assizes, Sessions, Fairs, Markets, and other publick Assemblies, their earnest labor to sollicit and draw the people to them, and the general correspondence held amongst them to advance their ends herein of these things we cannot but take notice, and must needs express our just fears, that their desires and indeavors are to work some great change and mutation in the present state of the Church Government; and in the form and publick worship of God, and Divine Service, and Common Prayers.*

Of the Common greivances of the Kingdom, we as others, have been and are sensible, and do profess that we have just cause with joy and comfort to remember; and with thankfulness to acknowledge the pious care which is already taken for the suppressing of the growth of Popery, the better supply of able and painful Ministers, and the removing of all Innovation, and we doubt not, but in your great wisdoms you will regulate the rigor and exorbitancy of the Ecclesiastical Courts, to suit with the temper of our Common Laws, and the nature and condition of Freemen. And we hope and humbly pray, that the present form of Church Government, and of Church Service, and Common Prayers, now established by the Statutes of this Kingdom shall be setled, and that all such as shall oppose themselves against the same, or shall do, or speak any thing in derogation or depraving of the said Divine Service, or Book of Common Prayer, may without any further tolleration or connivance undergo the pains, punishment and forfeitures due therefore; and that such care shall be taken for placing of Orthodox and peaceable men, Lecturers in all places, whose Doctrine may tend rather to sound instruction and edification, then lead to Schism and Faction; all which we humbly submit to your great judgements, and shall pray to God to assist and direct you from above with his heavenly wisdom, to guide and bring all your consultations to happy conclusions.

To the High and Honorable Court of *Parliament* now sitting.

The humble Petition and remonstrances of the Knights, Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders, and Inhabitans of the County of Somerset.

Delivered to the *House of Peers* by the Lord Marquess *Hartford* the 10. of *December*, 1641.

We humbly shew,

THat having with grief of mind heard of sundry Petitions, which have been exhibited to this Right Honorable Assembly, by some of the Clergy and Laity about *London*, and some Counties tending to the subversion of the Church Government established in this Kingdom; We therefore tendring the Peace and Welfare of both, do in all humbleness presume to make known our Opinions and desires concerning the same; Nothing doubting, of the like good acceptance of our humble *Petition* and *Remonstrance* in this behalf; being tendered with no less good Affection to the Peace and Happiness of the Church, the prosperity of His Sacred Majesty, and this whole Kingdom.

For the present government of the Church, we are most thankful to God, believing it in our hearts, to be the most pious and the wisest, that any people or Kingdom upon earth hath been blest withal since the Apostles days; though we may not deny, but through the frailty of Men, and corruption of times; some things of ill consequence, and other needless, are stollen, or thrust into it; which we heartily wish may be reformed, and the Church restored to its former Purity. And to the end, it may be the better preserved from present and future Innovation; we wish, that wittingly and maliciously guilty, of what condition soever they be (whether Bishops or inferior Clergy) may receive condign punishment. But, for the miscarriage of Government to destroy the Government; we trust it shall never enter into the hearts of this wise, and Honorable assembly.

We will not presume to dispute the Right of *Episcopacy*, whethether it be *Divine* or not; It sufficeth us to know that the *Church Government* by Bishops is ancient, even near to the Apostles days: and that it hath pleased God from time to time, to make them most glorious Instruments for the propagation, and preservation of Christian Religion; which with their blood, they have frequently sealed to Posterity. And how much this Kingdom in particular is indebted to them, for their Piety their Wisdoms, and Sufferings; we trust shall never be forgotten. Our hearts desire therefore is; that the *Precious* may be separated from the *Vile*; that the bad may be rejected, and the good retained. Furthermore, having credibly heard, that our *Common Prayer* hath been interrupted and dispised of some misunderstanding or misled People to the great scandal of the Religion professed in our Church; We humbly beseech you to take into your care the Redress thereof, as of an Impiety not to be endured; as also to take order for the severe punishment of those men (if they may be discovered) who frequently publish Pamphlets, under a vele of Religion, yet conducing to confusion and Rebellion.

All

All which we humbly offer to your Wiſdoms, as the thoughts and deſires of this *County*. And as we are perſwaded of multitudes of the ſound Members of the *Church of England*, and his *Sacred Majeſties* moſt loyal Subjects.

Beſeeching God to direct and proſper your Councels, and ye to pardon our Errors; we reſt

At your commands

Knights, Eſquires, Divines, Gentlemen, Freeholders; Inhabitants of the County of Sommerſet, (*none of them Papiſts, but all Proteſtants of the* Church *of* England) *and His Majeſties loyal Subjects.* } 14350

Whereof, Knights, Eſquires, and Gentlemen ——— 200

Divines ——— 211

John Brown Clerk Parliament.

To the High and Honorable Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen and Houſholders in the County of Rutland, *in behalf of our ſelves, and our families.*

And of the Parſons, Vicars and Curates for the Clergy, in behalf of themſelves and their Families.

Humbly ſhewing,

THat whereas there has been divers petitions exhibited to this honorable Court, by perſons diſaffected to the preſent Government, for the utter extirpation of the apoſtolical Government of the Church by Biſhops; they by ſedulity, and zeal ſupplying the want of fair pretences for the abolition of that, which we hope no juſt reaſon can condemn: and on the other ſide, many pious perſons, true Sons of the Church of England, *have repreſented their juſt deſires of the continuance of it, upon great and weighty cauſes, both in Divinity and true Policy; we alſo, leſt we might ſeem unconcerned, and for fear leaſt our ſilence ſhould be exacted as a crime at our hands if we be deficient, to what we are perſwaded is the cauſe of God; in purſuance of their pious intendments, and in allowance of their reaſons, do alſo preſs to your great Tribunal, and beg of you that which is the honor of Kings, to be* Nutricii *of the Church, and her moſt ancient and ſucceſſive Government.*

We therefore humbly beg of you, to leave us in that ſtate the Apoſtles left the Church in; That the three ages of Martyrs were governed by; That the thirteen Ages ſince them have always gloried in, (by their Succeſſion of Biſhops from the Apoſtles, proving themſelves members of the Catholick and Apoſtolick Church), that our Laws have eſtabliſhed, ſo many Kings and Parliaments have protected, into which we were Baptized; as certainly Apoſtolical, as the obſervation of the Lords Day, as the diſtinction of Book Apocryphal from Canonical, as that ſuch Books were written by ſuch Evangeliſts and Apoſtles; as the conſecration of the Euchariſt by Presbyters; as any thing which you will do by upholding the Government of the Church by Biſhops, which we again and again, beg of you to do, having pitty on our Conſciences, and not forcing of us to ſeek Communion, as yet we know not where. So ſhall we be bound to pray with a multiplied devotion, for the increaſe of publick, and perſonal bleſſings to your honorably aſſembly, to your noble Perſons.

We alſo do with all humility beg leave to repreſent theſe our Conſiderations, ſubjoyned, which we hope you will favorably expound to be a well-meant zeal, and at leaſt, a confidence of duty, and charity to thoſe our fathers, from whom we have received, and dayly hope to receive, many iſſues of Spiritual Beniſon.

1 WE conſider that Chriſt, either left his Church without a laſting Government, or elſe Biſhops and Presbyters under them are that Government; the former we fear to ſay, leaſt we might ſeem to accuſe the wiſdom of the Father of Improvidence, in the not providing for his Family; the Feeder and the Ruler in Scripture being all one in Office, in expreſſion, in perſon: So that, if he left no Rulers, he left no Feeders. The latter we are more confident of, for that Chriſt did clearly inſtitute a diſparity in the *Clergy*, which is the main ſtone of offence, appears in the Apoſtles, and ſeventy two Diſciples, to whom according to the voice of Chriſtendom, and traditive Interpretation of the Church. Biſhops and Presbyters reſpectively do ſucceed; and alſo many actually did ſucceed the Apoſtles in their *Chairs*, being ordained Biſhops by the Apoſtles themſelves that did ſurvive, and alſo beyond all exception that Chriſt did inſtitute a Government; appears in thoſe evangelical words, (who then is that *Faithful and wiſe Steward, whom his Lord ſhall make ruler over his houſhold, &c.*) which rulers are Biſhops, and Prieſts under them, or elſe the Church hath been Apoſtate from her Lord, ſhe having clearly for Fifteen Hundred Years had no other Rulers than ſuch.

2. We conſider that, whether it can be a Church or no without Biſhops, is at leaſt a queſtion of great conſideration, and the Negative is maintained by Apoſtolical, and primitive men and Martyrs, and by the greateſt part of Chriſtendome; and thoſe few (in reſpect of

the whole, that dissent being most certainly, not infalible, to be sure with Episcopacy, it may be a Church *extremis*, therefore it is the sureſt course to retain it, for fear we separate from the Church, the pillar and ground of Truth.

3. No Ordination never was without a Bishop, and if any Presbyter did ever impose hands, unless in conjunction with a Bishop, he was accounted an Usurper, and anathematized by publike and unquestioned authority; and so without Bishops, no Presbyter, then no absolution, no consecration of the Sacraments of the Lords supper, and for these wants, no man can make a recompence or satisfaction.

4. No presbyter did ever impose hands on a Bishop, which if so famous a Resolve, or publick voice of Christendome may have an estimate, shews their disparity, and that a Bishop hath a character, which cannot be imprinted without at least, an equal hand.

Viz. *De jure, non eidem de facto*, till 555 years after Christ and then but once in the case of Pope *Pelagius* and that irregularly and never since unless by Papal usurpation.

5. Without Bishops no Confirmation of Children, and yet confirmation (called in Scripture Imposition of hands) St. *Paul* in his famous Catechism accounts a fundamental point, and the Church hath alwayes used it, and it was appropriate to Bishops, by the laudable custome of Christendome, and by the example of the Apostles, in the case of the *Samaritane* Christians, whom *Philip* the Evangelist had converted, and is charged upon the parents of Children, that they bring their Children to Bishops to be confirmed, and it was never otherwise, but just as in the case of ordination, (*videlicet*) by singularity and usurpation, till of late, that the Jesuites to enlarge their *Philacteries*, have striven to make Bishops not necessary, by communicating Confirmation to the Priests of their Order.

6. To take away Bishops, is against the Wisdome of the State of *England*, ever since the Reformation, and having been attempted by clancular practises, was checked by the Princes respectively, and their Councel, and confidently, by the wisdome of preceding Parliaments, and this although the Bishops then were less learned, and as much infamed.

7. We are sure that Episcopal Government hath consisted with Monarchy, ever since the *Enlish* Monarchy was Christian, and we are to try whether any innovated Government can or will.

8. We consider, that if it could consist with monarchy, when it was byassed by the Popes prevalent incroachment, much more since the Reformation, when the King hath the raines in his own hand, and can give them Laws, and ascertaines them by their immediate dependance, both for their Baronies, and election and personal Jurisdiction on the Crown, and by the Statute of submission.

9. We consider that Saint *Hierome* (pretended as the main Anthentick enemy against Episcopacy) yet sayes, That Bishops were constituted as an antidote and deletory to dis-impove the issues of Schisme, and that by the Apostles, who best knew the remedies. And now that Schismes multiply, there is more need of Bishops, so that they cannot be taken away, upon pretence their Regiment is not necessary, for the taking them away makes them more necessary by the multiplication of Schismes.

Comens in Epist. ad Titum.

10. All Learning will be discountenanced, if not extinguished, upon the demolition of Episcopacy, the Bishops being parties for the advancement of Learning; and on the other side, if the Government should be in the hands of Presbytery, or lay Elders, we know no reason sufficient to stifle our fears, lest preferment be given to people unlearned and unfit to have the managing of Souls, especially, since a learned Clergy will be suspected by their Lay-elders, as too knowing to be ruled by their Dictates, which will not have so much artificy and fineness, as to command by strength of reason: which our fears are also increased, by considering that by the multiplication of Lay-Elders, or other Governors, their personal interest being increased, partiality must be more frequent, and all this is besides their incompetency of judging the abilities of Schollars.

11. The removal of Bishops would be a scandal, not only to many weak Christians, who fear all innovation, as guilty of some ill intendments upon their consciences, but also to the strongest which shews it to be the fault of the giver, not the weakness of the receiver; and if we must not scandalize our weak brethren, much less our strong, since this will intrench upon us in a high measure, they not being apt to be scandalized upon umbrages, and impertinencies.

12 Where Bishops are not, there is not a Honorable, but Familike Clergy, against the Apostolical rule of double honor.

13 By putting down Episcopacy, we deprive our selves of those solemn benedictions which the Faith of Christendom, and the profession of the *Church of England*, enjoyning the Bishop rather to pronounce the blessing at the end of the Communion, appropriates to Episcopal prehemminence above Priestly authority.

14 Two parts of three of the Reformed Churches are governed by Bishops, or Superintendents

dents (which is properly the Latine word of Bishops) and the other part that wants them, have often wished them, as their own Doctors do profess.

15 It is against the liberties of the Clergy, indulged to them by the *Magna Charta*, granted and confirmed by so many Kings, and about thirty Parliaments in expres act, and the violation of any part of it by intrenchment upon the right of the lay Subject, justly accounted a great grievance, the Charter it self being as Fundamental a Law (as we conceive) as any other, and any of us may fear least his Liberties may be next in question.

16 The four great General *Councels*, in estimation next the four *Evangelists*, and by the Statutes of the Kingdom, made the rules of the judging Heresies, were held by Bishops, the greatest fires and pests of Christendom, the old Heresies, were by their Industry extinct; Church Discipline, and pious constitutions by them established, many Nations by them converted, many Miracles done for the confirmation of *Christian Faith*, one of the Gospels written by a Bishop (Saint *Mark* of *Alexandria*) if we believe as authentick Records, as any are extent; Three Epistles of Saint *Paul* written to Bishops; Seven Epistles by the Holy Ghost himself recorded in the *Revelation*, and sent to seven *Asian* Bishops, as all ancient Fathers accord: the names of twelve men, besides Apostles, mentioned in Holy Scripture, which all antiquity reports to have been Bishops; Most of the Fathers, whose works all posterity embraces with much zeal and admiration, were Bishops; these also in our apprehensions advance that Holy Function, to a high and unalterable estimate.

Timotheus. Titus Clements Linus. Marcus. Dyonysius. Onesimus. Caius. Epaphroditus. Jacobus Hierosolimit. Evodius. Simeon.

17 Very many of the fairest Churches and Colledges, and places of Religion, were built by Bishops, which are fair Characters to shew their promptness to do publick acts of Piety, and that persons so qualified as they were, that is, Governors and Clergy, and fairely endowed, is an excellent compositions to advance publick designs for the honor of God in the Promotion of publick Piety.

18 Since it hath pleased this honorable Court, of late to commend a Protestation to us, which we by solemn Vow engaged our selves to attest with our lives and fortunes, the established Doctrine of the Church of *England*, we consider, that since the 36. article hath approved and established the book of *Consecration* of Bishops; the abolition of Episcopacy would nullifie that article, and should not we make humble Remonstrance to the contrary, we should suddenly recede from our great and solemn Protestation for maintenance of our *Church* Doctrine.

But may it please this Honoaable Assembly we consider on the other side.

19 The introducing of Lay Elders, must needs bring an insupportable burthen to all Parishes, by maintaining them at the Parish charge (for they must be maintained,) or else a transgression is made against an Apostolical Rule. For the principal, and indeed the only colorable pretended place for Lay Elders, injoynes their maintenance. So that either the people must be oppressed with so great burthens, or else Saint *Pauls* Rule not obeyed, or else there is no authority for Lay Elders, as indeed there is not.

20 And also there can be no less fear of Usurpation upon the Temporal power by the Presbytery, then is pretended from Episcopacy, since that Presbytery, challenges cognisance of more causes and persons, then the Episcopacy does, (so making a dangerous entrenchment upon the Supremacy) and derives its pretence from Divine Institution with more confidence and more immediate derivation then Episcopacy, though indeed most vainely as we conceive.

21 We crave leave also to add this that these two (*viz.*) Episcopacy and Presbytery being the only two in contestation if any new design should justle Episcopacy, we are confident that as it hitherto wants a name, so it will want a face, or form of reason (in case of Conscience) when it shall appear.

Signed by Knights, Justices, Gentry, and Free holders about } 800.

By Ministers about the number of 40.

The *Cheshire* Petition for establishing of the Common Prayer-Book, and Suppression of Schismaticks, presented to the Kings Majesty, and from him recommended to the House of Peers by the Lord KEEPER.

To the Kings most Excellent Majesty, and to the Right Honorable the Lords, and the Honorable the House of Commons Assembled in PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of divers of the Nobility, Justices, Gentry, Ministers, Free-holders, and other Inhabitants of the County *Palatine* of *Chester*, whose Names are here nominated.

Your Petitioners with all chearfulness and contentation, affying in the Happy settlement of the distractions both of Church & State, by His Majesties pious Care, and the prudent and religious endeavors of this

Honorable

Honorable Aſſembly, and with due humility and obedience, ſubmitting to the unanimous concluſions thereof, yet conceive themſelves bound in Duty.

HUmbly to repreſent to your mature conſiderations, that the preſent diſorders of many turbulent and ill diſpoſed Spirits, are ſuch, as give not only occaſion of preſent diſcontent to your Petitioners, but ſeem to import ſome ill event without early prevention.

The pure ſeed of our Faith (the Doctrin of the true Reformed Proteſtan Religion) eſtabliſhed by ſo many Acts of Parliament, and ſo harmoniouſly concurring with the confeſſions of all other Reformed Churches, being tainted with the Tares of divers Sects and Schiſmes lately ſprung up amongſt us.

Our pious, laudable, and ancient form of Divine Service, compoſed by the holy Martyrs, and worthy Inſtruments of Reformation eſtabliſhed by the prudent Sages of State (your religious Predeceſſors) honored by the approbation of many learned forraign Divines, ſubſcribed by the Miniſtery of the whole Kingdom, and with ſuch general content received by all the Laity, that ſcarce any Family or perſon that can read, but are furniſhed with the Books of Common Prayer: In the conſcionable uſe whereof many Chriſtian hearts have found unſpeakable joy and comfort, wherein the famous Church of *Engl.* our dear Mother, hath juſt cauſe to glory; And may ſhe long flouriſh in the practiſe of ſo bleſſed a *Liturgy*; yet it is now, not only depraved by many of thoſe who ſhould teach conformity to eſtabliſhed Laws, but in contempt thereof in many places wholly neglected. All theſe daily practiſed, with confidence, without puniſhment: To the great dejection of many ſound Proteſtants, and occaſioning ſo great inſultation and rejoycing in ſome Separatiſts, as they not only ſeem to portend, but menace ſome great alteration; And not containing themſelves within the bounds of Civil Government, do commit many tumultuous, (if not Sacrilegious) violences both by day and night upon divers Churches.

Therefore your Petitioners being all very apprehenſive of the dangerous conſequences of Innovation, and much ſcandalized at the preſent diſorders.

Do all unanimouſly pray,

That there be admitted no Innovation of Doctrine or Liturgy, that wholly publick Service being ſo faſt rooting by a long ſettled continuance in this Church, that in our Opinion and Judgement, is cannot be altered (unleſs by the advice and conſent of ſome National Synod) without an univerſal diſcontent. And that ſome ſpeedy courſe be taken to ſuppreſs ſuch Schiſmaticks and Separatiſts, whoſe factious Spirits do evidently endanger the peace both of Church and State.

And your Petitioners ſhall ever pray, &c.

The Petition ſigned by Lords, Knights, Juſtices of the Peace, and Eſquirers } 94.
By Gentlemen of quality, 440. By Divines, 80.
By Free-holders and others, in all } 8936.

To the Kings Moſt Excellent Majeſty and to the high Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humle Petition of *Colleges* and *Halls*, and others, well-willers to piety and Learning, throughout the Kingdom of *England*.

Sheweth,

THat whereas many Perſons diſaffected to the preſent form of Government of the Church of England *(eſtabliſhed not only by the Eccleſiaſtical, but alſo by the Common Law of this Realm, and diverſe Acts of Parliament) have of late in great multitudes petitioned this Honorable Court againſt the Orders, Honor, Juriſdiction, and means of the Clergy: And have publiſhed ſuch their deſires in print, and pulpit, and dayly ſeek to advance and propagate the ſame: To the great diſheartning of all Learning (if ſuch deſigns find favor) the grievous ſcandal of the Reformed Religion as unſtable, and the unſpeakable advantage of our Enemies of* Rome.

WE therefore (well weighing, that the Seminaries muſt decay when the Garden ſhall be waſted) in all humility moſt heartily pray your Majeſty, and this Honorable Court, that all the Orders of Holy Church, of Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons, which from the Apoſtles times till theſe, have withſtood ſo many practices, may have yet hopes to flouriſh under your gracious protection. And that by your aſſiſtance, under our moſt Religious Soveraign, the ancient Catholick Faith, and Diſcipline, as alſo the devout and decent ſervice of God, in our Church Liturgy, may be defended from all Innovations, and Novelties: The means and liberties of the Churches, as well Cathedral and Collegeat, as Parochial, to them hitherto of right belonging, according to the pious Wills of their bleſſed Founders, may be continued and preſerved: Many thouſand Families which on them depend, ſecured from ruin: And that our Nation, whoſe Laws already favor as much as any in the world, the right of the firſt born, may retain Eccleſiaſtical promotions, as the Patrimony of younger Children, the prize of labour and ſtudy, an incitement of learning, and a reward of thoſe that can intitle themſelves thereto by honeſt deſert.

And your Petitioners ſhall ever pray, &c.

This Petition is ſubſcribed, generally by all the Doctors, Maſters, and Batchelors of all Degrees and Faculties in the Univerſity of Oxford; *and by very many other perſons of quality: Baronets, Knights, Eſquires Miniſters and Gentlemen within the Counties of* Oxford, Berks, Wilts, South-hampton, Dorſet, Kent, Surrey, Weſtmorland, Cumberland, *and other ſhires.*

Devonſhire

Devonſhire Petition.

To the Right Honorable the Lords *Spiritual* and *Temporal*, now aſſembled in the Houſe of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Information and Petition of the Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, and others of ability, within the Dioceſs of Exeter.

WE whoſe Names are underwritten, have for theſe many years, found the benefit and comfort of *Epiſcopal Government*, under which we have lived hitherto peaceably, and happily, with great freedome and frequency of the Preaching of the Goſpel, and incouragement of the conſcionable and painfull preachers thereof. As we bleſs God for his favour to us in the behalf, So we doe humbly and earneſtly profeſs our deſire, that the ſame Government may be ſtill continued both to us, and our poſterity, ſubmitting all perſonal offences, and redreſs of abuſes to your Honourable Wiſdomes.

In witneſs whereof we have hereunto ſubſcribed.

Signed by Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, and other Inhabitants, neer upon Eight thouſand.

The Stafford-ſhire Petition.

To the Right Honorable the *Lords* and *Commons* aſſembled in the High Court of *Parliament*.

The humble Petition of the Knights, Gentlemen, Miniſters, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, within the County of Stafford, *hereunto ſubſcribed.*

Who moſt humbly pray,

THat the preſent publick form of Gods Worſhip, and Adminiſtration of the bleſſed Sacrament, with other Rites agreeable to Gods holy Word, and pureſt antiquity, which hath been formerly, ſundry times eſtabliſhed by godly Acts of *Parliament*, may now again in theſe broken & troubled times, be to Gods glory, and the Churches Peace, re eſtabliſhed, and confirmed.

That Epiſcopacy being the ancienteſt, and Primitive Government of the Church, renowned for ſucceſſes, victorious againſt Schiſmes and Hereſies, and eſpecially of late years, againſt that *Hydra* of Hereſies, the *Roman* Papacy, glorious for ancient and late Martyrdoms, happy before the corruption of Popery, and ſince the Reformation in the Plantation, and Preſervation of Truth and Peace; eminently ſerviceable to this Common-wealth, moſt compliable with the Civil Government (into the Fabrick, and body of which it is riveted and incorporate) and moſt apt and eaſie at all times by the State to be reduced into Order, may for the future, as formerly, by your great Authority be continued and maintained, for the glory of God, preſervation of Order, Peace, and Unity, the Reformation and ſuppreſſion of wickedneſs and vice, and the mature prevention of Schiſmes, Factions and Seditions. The which we, your humble Petitioners, the more earneſtly beſeech your Honors to grant, for that ſtrong fear do poſſeſs our hearts, that the ſudden mutation of a Government ſo long ſetled, ſo well known, and approved, cannot recompence with any proportionable utility, the diſturbances, and diſorders which it may work by novelty, being moſt confident, in your Honors, Wiſdom, and Juſtice; That all exceſſive exorbitances, and incroachments, which ſhall be found iſſuing, not from any poiſon in the nature of the Diſcipline, but rather from the infirmity, or corruption of the perſon (unto which the very beſt Government is ſubject,) ſhall be duly regulated, and corrected.

And your Petitioners ſhall duly pray for your Honors happieſt proceedings.

Subſcribed by 3000. of the beſt quality of the County.

To the Kings moſt Excellent Majeſty, and to the Right Honorable the Lords and the Honorable the Houſe of Commons aſſembled in Parliament.

The moſt humble Petition of divers Baronets, Knights, Juſtices, Gentry, Miniſters and Freeholders, Inhabitants of the County of KENT, *within the Dioceſe of* Canterbury.

Moſt humbly ſhewing,

THat notwithſtanding this Kingdom, hath by the ſingular providence of Almighty God, for many years laſt paſt, happily floriſhed, above all other Nations in the Chriſtian World, under the Religion and Government by Law eſtabliſhed: Yet hath it been of late moſt miſerably diſtracted through the ſiniſter practices of ſome private perſons ill affected to them both.

By whoſe means the preſent Government is diſgraced and traduced, the Houſes of God are Prophaned, and in part defaced, the Miniſters of Chriſt are contemned and deſpiſed, the Ornaments, and many Utenſils of the Church are abuſed, the Liturgy and Book of Common-prayer depraved, and neglected, that abſolute model of Prayer, *the Lords Prayer*, villified, the Sacraments of the Goſpel in ſome places unduly adminiſtred, in other places omitted, Solemn days of Faſting obſerved, and appointed by private perſons, Marriages illegally Solemnized, Burials charitably performed, and the very fundamental of our Religion ſubverted by the publication of a new Creed, and teaching the abrogation of the Moral Law. For which purpoſe, many

offenſive

Honorable Assembly, and with due humility and obedience, submitting to the unanimous conclusions thereof, yet conceive themselves bound in Duty.

HUmbly to represent to your mature considerations, that the present disorders of many turbulent and ill disposed Spirits, are such, as give not only occasion of present discontent to your Petitioners, but seem to import some ill event without early prevention.

The pure seed of our Faith (the Doctrin of the true Reformed Protestan Religion) established by so many Acts of Parliament, and so harmoniously concurring with the confessions of all other Reformed Churches, being tainted with the Tares of divers Sects and Schismes lately sprung up amongst us.

Our pious, laudable, and ancient form of Divine Service, composed by the holy Martyrs, and worthy Instruments of Reformation established by the prudent Sages of State (your religious Predecessors) honored by the approbation of many learned forraign Divines, subscribed by the Ministery of the whole Kingdom, and with such general content received by all the Laity, that scarce any Family or person that can read, but are furnished with the Books of Common Prayer: In the conscionable use whereof many Christian hearts have found unspeakable joy and comfort, wherein the famous Church of *Engl.* our dear Mother, hath just cause to glory; And may she long flourish in the practise of so blessed a *Liturgy*; yet it is now, not only depraved by many of those who should teach conformity to established Laws, but in contempt thereof in many places wholly neglected. All these daily practised, with confidence, without punishment: To the great dejection of many sound Protestants, and occasioning so great insultation and rejoycing in some Separatists, as they not only seem to portend, but menace some great alteration; And not containing themselves within the bounds of Civil Government, do commit many tumultuous, (if not Sacrilegious) violences both by day and night upon divers Churches.

Therefore your Petitioners being all very apprehensive of the dangerous consequences of Innovation, and much scandalized at the present disorders.

Do all unanimously pray,

That there be admitted no Innovation of Doctrine or Liturgy, that wholly publick Service being so fast rooting by a long setled continuance in this Church, that in our Opinion and Judgement, is cannot be altered (unless by the advice and consent of some National Synod) without an universal discontent. And that some speedy course be taken to suppress such Schismaticks and Separatists, whose factious Spirits do evidently endanger the peace both of Church and State.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

The Petition signed by Lords, Knights, Justices of the Peace, and Esquirers } 94.
By Gentlemen of quality, 430. By Divines, 80.
By Free-holders and others, in all 8936.

To the Kings Most Excellent Majesty and to the high Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humle Petition of *Colleges* and *Halls*, and others, well-willers to piety and Learning, throughout the Kingdom of *England.*

Sheweth,

THat whereas many Persons disaffected to the present form of Government of the Church of England *(established not only by the Ecclesiastical, but also by the Common Law of this Realm, and diverse Acts of Parliament) have of late in great multitudes petitioned this Honorable Court against the Orders, Honor, Jurisdiction, and means of the Clergy: And have published such their desires in print, and pulpit, and dayly seek to advance and propagate the same: To the great disheartning of all Learning (if such designs find favor) the grievous scandal of the Reformed Religion as unstable, and the unspeakable advantage of our Enemies of* Rome.

WE therefore (well weighing, that the Seminaries must decay when the Garden shall be wasted) in all humility most heartily pray your Majesty, and this Honorable Court, that all the Orders of Holy Church, of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, which from the Apostles times till these, have withstood so many practices, may have yet hopes to flourish under your gracious protection. And that by your assistance, under our most Religious Soveraign, the ancient Catholick Faith, and Discipline, as also the devout and decent service of God, in our Church Liturgy, may be defended from all Innovations, and Novelties: The means and liberties of the Churches, as well Cathedral and Collegeat, as Parochial, to them hitherto of right belonging, according to the pious Wills of their blessed Founders, may be continued and preserved: Many thousand Families which on them depend, secured from ruin: And that our Nation, whose Laws already favor as much as any in the world, the right of the first born, may retain Ecclesiastical promotions, as the Patrimony of younger Children, the prize of labour and study, an incitement of learning, and a reward of those that can intitle themselves thereto by honest desert.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

This Petition is subscribed, generally by all the Doctors, Masters, and Batchelors of all Degrees and Faculties in the University of Oxford; *and by very many other persons of quality: Baronets, Knights, Esquires Ministers and Gentlemen within the Counties of* Oxford, Bucks, Wilts, South-hampton, Dorset, Kent, Surrey, Westmorland, Cumberland, *and other shires.*

Devonshire

Devonſhire Petition.

To the Right Honorable the Lords *Spiritual* and *Temporal*, now aſſembled in the Houſe of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Information and Petition of the Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, and others of ability, within the Dioceſs of Exeter.

WE whoſe Names are underwritten, have for theſe many years, found the benefit and comfort of *Epiſcopal Government*, under which we have lived hitherto peaceably, and happily, with great freedome and frequency of the Preaching of the Goſpel, and incouragement of the conſcionable and painfull preachers thereof. As we bleſs God for his favour to us in the behalf, So we doe humbly and earneſtly profeſs our deſire, that the ſame Government may be ſtill continued both to us, and our poſterity, ſubmitting all perſonal offences, and redreſs of abuſes to your Honourable Wiſdomes.

In witneſs whereof we have hereunto ſubſcribed.

Signed by Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, and other Inhabitants, neer upon Eight thouſand.

The Stafford-ſhire Petition.

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The humble Petition of the Knights, Gentlemen, Miniſters, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, within the County of Stafford, *hereunto ſubſcribed.*

Who moſt humbly pray,

THat the preſent publick form of Gods Worſhip, and Adminiſtration of the bleſſed Sacrament, with other Rites agreeable to Gods holy Word, and pureſt antiquity, which hath been formerly, ſundry times eſtabliſhed by godly Acts of *Parliament*, may now again in theſe broken & troubled times, be to Gods glory, and the Churches Peace, re eſtabliſhed, and confirmed.

That Epiſcopacy being the ancienteſt, and Primitive Government of the Church, renowned for ſucceſſes, victorious againſt Schiſmes and Hereſies, and eſpecially of late years, againſt that *Hydra* of Hereſies, the *Roman* Papacy, glorious for ancient and late Martyrdoms, happy before the corruption of Popery, and ſince the Reformation in the Plantation, and Preſervation of Truth and Peace; eminently ſerviceable to this Common-wealth, moſt compliable with the Civil Government (into the Fabrick, and body of which it is riveted and incorporate) and moſt apt and eaſie at all times by the State to be reduced into Order, may for the future, as formerly, by your great Authority be continued and maintained for the glory of God, preſervation of Order, Peace, and Unity, the Reformation and ſuppreſſion of wickedneſs and vice, and the mature prevention of Schiſmes, Factions and Seditions. The which we, your humble Petitioners, the more earneſtly beſeech your Honors to grant, for that ſtrong fear do poſſeſs our hearts, that the ſudden mutation of a Government ſo long ſetled, ſo well known, and approved, cannot recompence with any proportionable utility, the diſturbances, and diſorders which it may work by novelty, being moſt confident, in your Honors, Wiſdom, and Juſtice; That all exceſſive exorbitances, and incroachments, which ſhall be found iſſuing, not from any poiſon in the nature of the Diſcipline, but rather from the infirmity, or corruption of the perſon (unto which the very beſt Government is ſubject,) ſhall be duly regulated, and corrected.

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Subſcribed by 3000. of the beſt quality of the County.

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The moſt humble Petition of divers Baronets, Knights, Juſtices, Gentry, Miniſters and Freeholders, Inhabitants of the County of KENT, *within the Dioceſe of* Canterbury.

Moſt humbly ſhewing,

THat notwithſtanding this Kingdom, hath by the ſingular providence of Almighty God, for many years laſt paſt, happily floriſhed, above all other Nations in the Chriſtian World, under the Religion and Government by Law eſtabliſhed: Yet hath it been of late moſt miſerably diſtracted through the ſiniſter practices of ſome private perſons ill affected to them both.

By whoſe means the preſent Government is diſgraced and traduced, the Houſes of God are Prophaned, and in part defaced, the Miniſters of Chriſt are contemned and deſpiſed, the Ornaments, and many Utenſils of the Church are abuſed, the Liturgy and Book of Common-prayer depraved, and neglected, that abſolute model of Prayer, *the Lords Prayer*, villified, the Sacraments of the Goſpel in ſome places unduly adminiſtred, in other places omitted, Solemn days of Faſting obſerved, and appointed by private perſons, Marriages illegally Solemnized, Burials charitably performed, and the very fundamental of our Religion ſubverted by the publication of a new Creed, and teaching the abrogation of the Moral Law. For which purpoſe, many

offenſive

offenſive Sermons are daily preached, and many impious Pamphlets printed, and in contempt of authority, many do what ſeemeth good in their own eyes, only as if there were no King, nor Government, in this our *Iſrael*.

Whereby Almighty God is highly provoked, His ſacred Majeſty diſhonored, The peace of the Kingdom endangered, The Conſciences of the people diſquieted, The Miniſters of Gods Word diſheartned, and the Enemies of the Church emboldened in their enterpriſes.

For redreſs whereof, May it pleaſe this great and honorable Counſel, ſpeedily to command a due obſervation of the Religion and Government, by law eſtabliſhed, in ſuch manner, as it may ſeem beſt to the piety and Wiſdom of His Royal Majeſty, and this Honorable Court.

Your Petitioners as they ſhall confidently expect a bleſſing from Heaven upon this Church and Kingdom, So ſhall they have this further cauſe to implore the Divine Aſſiſtance upon this honorable Aſſembly.

Subſcribed by

Knight Baronets, and Knights	24	Eſquires and Gentlemen of note, above	300
Divines	108	Freeholders, and Subſidy men	800

All within the Dioceſe of *Canterbury*.

To the Hon. Knights Citizens, and Burgeſſes of the Houſe of *Commons* Aſſembled in Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Gentry, Clergy, and other inhabitants, ſubſcribed of the Counties of Flint, Denby, Mountgomery, Carnarvan, Angleſey, Merioneth, *being the ſix Shires of* Northwales.

As it was preſented this preſent March *the* 5. 1641. *Accompanied with thirty thouſand hands.*

WHereas the preſent condition of the Church of *England* (in the publick Liturgy thereof, in the ancient liberties, and form of Government, as they do now ſtand eſtabliſhed by Law) hath been lately brought in queſtion, and manifold Petitions from the ſeveral quarters of this Kingdom, and other ſuch like addreſſes concerning the ſame have been preſented to this honorable Houſe.

We His Majeſties faithful Subjects in the principalities and Counties of *North-wales*, whom it equally concerneth, and as ſtrongly tied in duty and conſcience, do likewiſe preſume to make our humble Remonſtrance, and we do it after a long ſilence and expectation, joyned with ſome fears.

And firſt, for thoſe things which concern the Publick Service of God, as they be of neareſt importance, and we nothing doubt, but you will take unto your tendreſt thoughts, ſo we do earneſtly propound and proſtrate before you that dangerous conſequence of Innovation in matters of ſo high concernment as we conceive, and leave it to your own great Wiſdoms to Judge, what ſcruples and jealouſies are like to ariſe, if we be taught a new and different way of ſerving God after a full perſwaſion of the lawfulneſs of that which is preſcribed according to the word of God, not without the deliberate, and concurrent approbation and induſtry of the moſt learned of the Proteſtant Church, of this and other Nations, and the poſſeſſion of ſo many years in the practiſe thereof, and all ſince the bleſſed time of Reformation.

The meer report hereof hath already produced no good effect, breeding in the mindes of ill diſpoſed perſons, Inſolence and contempt, in others perplexity and grief, not knowing how to ſettle themſelves, or form their obedience in ſuch diſtractions, and ſometimes repugnancy of commands.

Then for the outward policy and form of Government, under the Juriſdiction of Biſhops, bounded by Law, and kept within their own limits.

It is as we believe, that form which came into this *Iſland*, with the firſt Plantation of Religion here, and God ſo bleſt this *Iſland*, that Religion came early in, with the firſt dawning of the day, very near, or in the time of the Apoſtles themſelves. And in the ſucceſſion of all after ages, the ſame hath been conſtantly maintained among us, and that without any eminent interruption, or gain-ſaying, even till theſe our dayes.

And now from the comfortable experience which we feele and which our Fathers have told us, of the conveniency & moderation of this Government, together with the antiquity of the ſame (a ſtrong argument of Gods ſpecial protection.) We do in all humility repreſent and pray that the ſame may be ſtill preſerved intire in all the parts thereof, profeſſing yet withal, that we heartily diſclaim all ſcandalous Innovation, and Popiſh corruption whatſoever.

And as we doubt not but your great Wiſdoms will take care that our Doctrine and Diſcipline eſtabliſhed, ſhall be ſtill in force and obſerved, until by ſome abſolute Law, and the opinions of learned Convocations, or Synod (according to the Cuſtoms of our prudent fore-fathers in beſt times) it be otherwiſe ordained.

So ſhall we never ceaſe to pray for a permanent bleſſing upon your Counſels, to the general happineſs of Church and Kingdom.

To the Sacred Majeſty, of our moſt Gracious Soveraign Lord King *CHARLES*.

The humble gratulation and petition of divers, His Majeſties Faithful Subjects within the County *Palatine* of *Lancaſter*.

Moſt Gracious Sovereign,

THe moſt Reall and convincing'ſt Teſtimonies of your princely care, for the advancement of Gods true Religion in your Majeſties Realmes, And the common good of all your ſubjects. Could no leſs then draw from us (who have hitherto in theſe ſtirring Times ſat ſtill) this humble acknowledgment of our due and neceſſary thanks.

We with the inmoſt and choiceſt thoughts of our ſoules, do eſteeme and prize your Majeſties moſt righteous intentions, of governing your liege people, according to the wholſome Laws of this Kingdom. A thing ſo often, and with ſuch earneſtneſſe avowed by your ſacred Majeſty, whereunto we yeeld that hearty credence, which is due to ſo religious a Prince. We do alſo with all humility and thankfulneſs acknowledg your manifold and evident manifeſtations, (to the World) that you affect not an arbitrary Government, but the Common proſperity, and happineſs of all your Loyal Subjects: by your readineſs to joyn with your Parliament in ſpeedy raiſing of forces for a timely ſuppreſſion, of that odious Rebellion in Ireland, by your late Proclamation for the putting in due execution the Laws againſt Papiſts. By your moſt Gracious Condiſcending to the deſires of your Great Council: in ſigning the Bill for the Triennial Parliament, for the relinquiſhing your Title impoſing upon Merchandize, and power of preſſing ſouldiers. For the taking away the Starchamber: and High Commiſſion Court, for regulating the Councel Table, As alſo the bils for the forreſts and Stanneric Courts, with other moſt neceſſary acts. Moreover, we are confident, and well aſſured of your Majeſties zeal, for the advancement of the true Proteſtant Religion. And with inexpreſſible joy do underſtand your moſt Chriſtian and pious reſolution, for the preſervation of thoſe powerful encouragements of Induſtry, Learning, and Piety, the means and honour of the Miniſtry, for the maintenance and continuance of our Church Govenment, and ſolemne Liturgy of the Church, of long continuance, and general approbation of the moſt pious and learned of this Nation, and of the other Counties: Compoſed (according to the Primitive patterne) by our bleſſed Martyrs and other Religious and learned men. As alſo your gratious plaſure, that all abuſes of Church and ſtate ſhall be reformed, according to the modell of Queen Elizabeths *daye, of ever bleſſed & famous memory, By the one you have weakned the hopes of the ſacrilegious devourers of the (Churches Patrimony (if there be any ſuch) And by the other provided againſt all Popiſh impieties and Idolatries; and alſo againſt the growing danger of* Anabaptiſts, Browniſts, *and other* Noveliſts. *All which piety, love, and juſtice, we beſeech God to return into your Royal boſome But yet moſt gracious Soveraign, there is one thing that ſads our hearts, and hinders the perfection of our happineſs which is the miſ-underſtanding between your Majeſty and your Parliament*

ment, whereby the hearts of your ſubjects are filled with fears and jealouſies Juſtice neglected, ſacred Ordinances prophaned, and Trading impaired to the impoveriſhing of many of your liege people. For the removal whereof we cannot find out any lawfull means without your Maj ſties aſſiſtance and direction.

Wherefore we humbly beſeech your moſt Excellent Majeſty, to Continue your moſt Chriſtian and Pious Reſolution of Ruling your people, according to the Laws of the Land, and maintaining of the ſame, of being a zeaous Defender of the eſtabliſhed Doctrine, Liturgie, and Government of our Church from hereſies, Libertiniſme, and prophaneneſs, an advancer of Learning, Piety, and Religion, an Encourager of Learned, Painfull, Orthodox Preachers. And whatſoever your Parliament ſhall offer to your Royall view, conducing to this bleſſed end, the common good and tranquility of your ſubjects, to be Pleaſed to condiſcend unto, and gratiouſly to confirm, and withall to declare unto us ſome expedient way how we may make a dutiſull addreſs unto your Parliament, for the taking away of theſe differences and impediments which ſtay the happy proceedings (of that moſt honourable Aſſembly, whereof your Majeſty is the head) which once removed, we doubt not, but you willbe as near your Parliament in perſon, as in affection. That there may be a bleſſed harmony betwixt your Highneſs, and that great Council, we ſhall with all alacrity obſerve the ſame. Humbly rendring our lives, and fortunes for the preſervation of your Royal perſon, Crown and dignity, according to our bounded duty and and allegiance. And heartily praying for your Majeſties long and proſperous Reign over us.

We the Subſcribers of this Petition, do hereby give authority unto the Bearers hereof to put our names to ſuch tranſcript hereof, as ſhall be preſented to his Majeſty.

Atteſted by Knights and Eſqires 64. *Divines* 55. *Gentlemen* 740. *Freeholders near* 7000.

To the KINGS moſt Excellent MAJESTY,

The humble Petition of the County of *Cornwal.*

VVF *your Majeſties Loyal Subjects, In all duty render unto your Majeſty all thankfulneſs, for your Majeſties unexampled favour, and grace in granting unto your Subjects (in concurrence with your Parliament) ſuch Laws and Freedoms, which have moſt fully expreſſed your Majeſties gracious goodneſs unto your people, and we moſt thankfully receive your Majeſties free offer of a general pardon, whereof we moſt humbly deſire to be made partakers. And we moſt humbly beſeech your Majeſty never io ſuffer your Subjects to be governed by an Arbytrary Government, nor admit an alteratoin in Religion. And your Petitioners being moſt feelingly grieved for yonr Majeſties diſcontents: partly occaſioned by divers ſcandalous Pamphlets, and no way leſſened by Seditious Sermons: Do wiſh a confluence of all comforts, honour and happineſs unto your Majeſty: and do heartily pray for the reconcilement betwixt your Majeſty and your Parliament. And in all thankfulneſs for your Majeſties ſaid grace and goodneſs, your Petitioners do offer themſelves moſt ready to maintain, and defend with their lives and fortunes, Your Majeſties ſacred Perſon, Honour, and Eſtate: And lawful Prerogative againſt all perſons whaſoever, aecording to the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy.*

May 22. 1642. Indorſed,

We the Petitioners to this Petition, do conſtitute and appoint, *Peter Courtney, Walter Langdon Benatus Bellot*, and *Nevil Bligh* Eſquires, to deliver this Petition, in the name of the County of *Cornwall* to his ſacred Majeſty.

To the Honourable Houſe of Commons Aſſembled in Parliament,

The Humble Petition of the Gentry Miniſters and Commonalty of the County of *Kent*, agreed upon at the general Aſſizes of the County.

Moſt humbly ſheweth,

THat we cannot but take notice, how welcome to this Honourable Houſe, many Petitions have been, which yet came not from an aſſembled Body of any County (as this doth) we do therefore hope to find as gentle and favourable a Reception of this, as any other have found of their Petitions, our hearts witneſſing unto us, as good, peaceable, and pious purpoſes as the beſt.

Theſe are therefore the true and ardent deſires of this County.

1. That you will be pleaſed to accept our due, and hearty thanks for thoſe excellent Laws by his Ma jeſties grace and goodneſs) you have obtained for us.

2. that all Laws againſt Papiſts, be put in due execution, and an account taken of their diſar ing, and that all Children of the Papiſts may be brought up in the reformed Religion.

3. That the ſolemn Liturgy of the Church of *England* (Celebrious by the piety of the *Biſhops* and Martyrs who compoſed it) eſtabliſht by the ſupream Laws of this Land, atteſted and approved by the beſt of all Foreign Divines, confirmed by the ſubſcription of all the Miniſtry of this Land, a Clergy as able and Learned as any in the Chriſtian-world e're enjoyed, and with a holy Love embraced, by the moſt and beſt of all the Laity, that this holy exerciſe of Re-

ligion may by your Authority by enjoyed quiet and free from interruptions, ſcorns, prophaneneſſe, threats and force of ſuch men, who daily doe deprave it and neglect the uſe of it in divers Churches, in deſpight of the Laws eſtabliſhed.

4. That Epiſcopal Government, as ancient in this Iſland as Chriſtianity it ſelf, deduced and diſperſed throughout the Chriſtian world even from the Apoſtolicall times, may be preſerved (as the moſt pious, and moſt prudent, andmoſt ſafe Government for peace of the Church.

5. That all differences concerning Religion and Ceremonies may be referred to a lawfull free and Nationall Synod, as your Remonſtrance promiſeth, to a generall Synod of moſt grave learned, pious and Judicious Divines, (the proper agents) whoſe intereſts, gifts, and callings, may quicken them in that great Worke, whoſe choyce to be by all the Clergy of the land, becauſe all the Clergy are to be bound by their reſolutions and the determination of this Synod to bind us all when you have firſt formed them into a Law, and this we taketo be according to the ancient and fundamentall Law of this Land, confirmed by Magna Charta.

6 That ſome ſpeedy and good proviſion may be made (as by his Majeſty hath been and is by all good men deſired) againſt the odious and abominable ſcandal of ſchiſmatical and ſeditious Sermons and Pamphlets, and ſome ſevere Law made againſt Lay men, for daring to arrogate to themſelves, and to execute the holy function of the Miniſtry, who (ſome of them do ſow their impious and diſconſented Doctrine, even in ſacred places by abuſe of ſacred Ordinances, to the advancing of Hereſie, Schiſme, Prophaneneſs, Libertiniſme, Anabaptiſme and Atheiſme

7. That if the coerſive power of Eccleſiaſtical Courts byway of Excommunication be already abrogated, or ſhall be thought fit ſo to be, that there be ſome other power and authority ſpeedily eſtabliſhed, for ſuppreſſing the heynous, and now ſo much abounding ſins of Inceſt, Adultery and Fornication, and other crimes, and for recovering Tythes repayring of Churchse, probate of Wils, Church aſſeſſes, providing Bread and Wine for the Communion, and choyce of Church Wardens, and other Officers in the Church, and eſpecially for Miniſters, who neglect the Celebrating of the holy Communion, and the Pariſhioners for not Receiving.

8. That the Profeſſors of that Learned faculty of the Civill Law, and (without which this Kingdome cannot but ſuffer manifold Inconveniences) may not finde diſcouragements, and ſo divert their ſtudees and Profeſſions.

9. That honour and profits, the powerful encouragements of Induſtry, Learning, and Piety, may be preſerved without further dimination to the Clergy.

10. That you pleaſe ſadly to conſider the bleeding wounds of our brethren in *Ireland*, and with ſpeedy ſuccours endeavour to preſerve them, whereunto his Majeſty hath promiſed a gratious concurrence.

11. That you will pleaſe to frame an eſpecial Law of the Regulation of the Militia of this Kingdom, ſo that the Subject may know how at once to obey, both his Majeſty, and both houſes of Parliament, a Law whereby may be left to the diſcretion of Governours, as little as may be but that the number of Armes, and what meaſure of puniſhment ſhall be inflicted upon the offendours, may be expreſly ſet down in the act, and not left to any Arbitrary power, and that according to the preſident of former Laws, the offendours may not be tried out of the County.

12. That the pretious liberty of the Subject (the Common birth-right of every Engliſh-man) may be as in all theſe points preſerved entire, ſo in this alſo, that no order of eitner of both Houſes, not grounded on the Laws of this Land, may be enforced on the Subject, till it be full enacted by Parliament.

13. That the Majeſties gratious meſſage of the 20 of Jan. laſt for the preſent and future eſtabliſhment of the Priviledges of Parliment, the free enjoying of our eſtates and fortunes, the Liberty of our perſons, the ſecurity of the true Religion porfeſſed, the maintaining of his Majeſties juſt and Regall authority, the eſtabliſhing his Revenue, may be taken in to ſpeedy conſideration, the effecting whereof will ſatisfie the deſires of all us his faithfull and loving ſubjects.

14. That all poſſible care may be taken that the Native commodities of this Kingdome may have a quick vent, and that Cloathing, and other Manufactures may be improved, wherein the livelihood of many thouſands do conſiſt, and that Trade may be balanced, that the importation do not exceed the exportation, otherwiſe it will prove a conſumption of the Land.

15. That you pleaſe to frame ſome laws concerning Depopulations, Purveyances, Carttaking, delayes in Juſtice, Tarffick, Fiſhing in the Coaſts, Fulling-earth, that our Sea Forts may be repaired, and our Magazine renewed.

16. That you pleaſe to conſider the generall poverty that ſeems to overgrow this Kingdome.

17. Laſtly, We humbly beſeech you to conſider the ſad condition that we and the whole Land are in, if a good underſtanding be not ſpeedily renewed between his Majeſty, and both Houſes of Parliament.

Our hopes are yet above our fears, ſecure them we be ſeech you. God direct & guide your conſolations. for the removing of all diſtruſts and Iealouſies. for the renewing that tye of confidence and truſt, (with is the higheſt happineſs) between our gracious Prince, and his loving Subjects.

And you ſhall have the daily prayers of your humble Orators of the Commoralty of Kent.

To

To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens and Burgeſſes of the Houſe of Commons Aſſembled in Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Barons, Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, Clergy-men, Freeholders, Subſidy-men, and others of good Rank and Quality in the County of Oxford.

Agreed upon, and ſubſcribed, at the times of their Meetings to take the Proteſtation ſent to them.

HUMBLY SHEWING,

THat whereas ſome Petitions have been expoſed in print, the common view under the names of the Knights Gentlemen, Freeholders, Subſidy men, of the beſt Rank and Quality of the County of Oxford, *as preferred to the Honourable Houſe of Parliament,*

We do hereby crave leave, to ſhew to this Honourable Houſe, that ſuch Petitions have not received publick Examination amongſt us, at any General meeting directed by Authority, for the ſervice of the County.

AND we your now Petitioners, knowing our ſelves to be the Major-part of thoſe degrees within this County, and as deſirous to expreſs our gratitude in this Honourable Houſe, for your unwearied Labours, and the happy effects thereof, for the good of this Land and State, do hereby offer up in all Humility, the greateſt expreſſion of our thankfulneſs: and in like maaner, our unanimous deſires.

That the *Government* of this *Church* may continue, as is now by Law eſtabliſhed: And that the *Liturgy* may be ſetled with ſuch alterations (if there be cauſe) as your wiſdomes ſhall approve.

That the Laws againſt Papiſts which oppoſe our Religion, and againſt Sectaries (of late dangerouſly encreaſed among us) that trouble the Peace thereof, may be put in full Execution: And where thoſe laws are defective, ſuch further remedy therein may be provided, as to your wiſdoms ſhall ſeem fit.

That a free *Synod* of *Orthodox* and peaceable Divines may be convened, according to the form of the Primitive and pureſt times of *Chriſtianity*, for compoſing of all differencies in *Doctrine* and *Ceremonies* of *Religion*.

That the ſafety of this County and Kingdom may be provided for, by the diſpoſing of ſuch a Militia, as may conſiſt with the Native Liberties of the Subject.

That you would be pleaſed to continue your Care in haſtening the further Relief of our diſtreſſed Brethren in *Ireland*.

And your Petitioners ſhall be ready to maintain with their Lives and Eſtates, his Majeſties Perſon, Honour, and Eſtate, together with the Rights and Priviledges of Parliament.

And your Petitioners ſhall ever pray &c.

To the moſt Honourable and High Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the Gentlemen, and others of the Inhabitants of the County of Cornwall.

HAving ſeen and heard the many (though ſcarce divers) Petitions to this Honourable Aſſembly, by the Inhabitants of divers Counties and Cities of this Land, as alſo Corporations, Companies and Trades, ſome againſt Biſhops, ſome againſt the Common-Prayer, and all againſt ſuch Judicials and things ſuper-elementary to the Region of their capacity of judging, and matters only belonging to the Judicature of this grave Synod, which ſeems either to diſtruſt or direct, or both, your grave wiſdoms: We therefore the Gentlemen, and other the Inhabitants of *Cornwall*, with as many hearts, though not hands, with as many good wills, though not perſons not in imitation, but rather by provocation, and neceſſity, in theſe times, to ſhew our good minded affections, do humbly proſtrate the utmoſt of our ſervice at your feet In which (or rather after which) we take leave humbly to beg.

That you would be pleaſed to bend your auxilliary and good affections to the redreſs of the diſtreſs of the miſerable Proteſtants in Ireland. To gain whoſe good, proſperity, peace and tranquility, to preſerve the Soveraignty of that land to our Royal King, and to maintain his, and this Kingdoms honour, we ſhall willingly lay down our lives and fortunes.

That you will be pleaſed to continue your great reſpect, dutiful love, and true obedience to our Royal Soveraign, by maintaining his juſt and no way Antilegal Prerogative

That you will be pleaſed to put the Laws in due execution againſt all Jeſuites, Seminaries, Papiſts, and Recuſants.

That you will be pleaſed to look upon the other ſide, and duly weighing the actions (or rather factions) of ſome, (whom we will call Citizens) to ſcourge their irregular and diſorderly Schiſm, and heretical Sects, into right paths of ſerving God, to frequent his Houſe, and to pray as well as hear, to allow Order, and obey Conformity, to reverence learning and bow to Authority, to be under a Diſcipline, and live in order.

That you will be pleaſed to maintain and eſtabliſh the Antient Fundamental, and moſt venerable Laws, Order, and Diſcipline, both of our Church and Common-wealth, to continue the Reverenced Office, and puniſh the offending perſons of Biſhops, to have in high account, and eternize (as far as in you lies) the Divine and excellent form of Common-Prayer, to correct brain-forged doctrine, by your examplary precepts ſtrike a Reverence of Gods Houſe into every mans Breaſt

That you will be pleaſed to intimate to the people, your honourable and wiſe intentions concerning Divine Service, leſt while you hold your peace, ſome rejecting it in part, other altogether, they vainly conceive you countenance them.

Laſtly, (Not to trouble your great affairs any longer) that you will be pleaſed to take into your Sage conſideration, thoſe ſcandalous and ill affected Pamphlets, which fly abroad in ſuch ſwarms, as are able to cloud the pure Air of Truth, and preſent a dark ignorance to thoſe who have not the two wings of Juſtice and Knowledge to fly above them.

Now to poliſh this our work with a ſmooth demonſtration of our moſt ſimple intents, that the tinctures which in Introduction fell on the fore-mentioned preſents, may ſlide without a ſtain from this; We do in all humility declare, that neither diſtruſt of your intentions, nor opinion of any of our Counſels worthy your ears, even tainted our thoughts, but that we have ſtill been, and are Confident, that this moſt wiſe Synod hath ever thought fit, reſolved, and will confirm into action, what we now humbly requeſt therefore this our preſent, not ſo much a Petition, as a Prayer of willing and thankful hearts for the hoped ſequel, is only to ſhew our true intentions and good will towards his gracious Majeſty; and this high Court, as Inſtruments of the peace of our ſouls and bodies, for which we are unanimouſly and immutably reſolv'd to ſpend our deareſt bloud.

Publiſhed by *F. B. Gent.*

To the Right Honourable the Lords and Commons Aſſembled in the High-Court of Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, Miniſters, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, within the County of *Hereford*. Who moſt humbly pray,

THat the preſent publick form of Gods Worſhip, and the Adminiſtration of the bleſſed Sacraments, with other Rites agreeable to Gods holy Word, and pureſt Antiquity, which have been ſundry times eſtabliſhed by godly Acts of Parliament, may now again in theſe broken and troubled times be to Gods Glory, add the Churches Peace,

re-eſta-

re-eſtabliſhed and confirmed; That Epiſcopacy being the Antient and primitive Government of the Church, nowned for Succeſſes, Victorious againſt Schiſms, and Hereſies, and eſpecially of late years againſt that *Hydra* Hereſies, the *Roman* Papacy, glorious for ancient and late Martyrdoms, Happy before the corruption of Popery, and ſince the Reformation in the plantation and preſervation of Truth and Peace, eminently ſerviceable to this Common wealth, moſt compliable with the Civil-Government, into the Fabrick and body of which it is riverted and incorporated, and moſt apt and eaſie at all times by the State to be reduced into Order, may for the future (as formerly) by your great authority be continued and maintained for the glory of God, the preſervation of Order, Peace, and Unity, the Reformation and ſuppreſſion of wickedneſs and vice, and the mature prevention of Schiſms, Factions, and Sedi-ons, that Cathedrals, the monuments of our Foreſathers Charity, the reward of preſent Literature and furtherance of Piety, be alſo continued.

The which, we your humble Petitioners the more earneſtly beſeech your Honours to grant, for that ſtrange fears diſpoſſeſs our hearts, that the ſudden mutation of Government, ſo long ſetled, ſo well known, and approved, cannot recompence the diſturbances and diſorders, which it may work by novelty, with any proportionable utility, being moſt confident, in your Honours, Wiſdoms and Juſtice, that all Exceſſes, Exorbitancies and Encroachments, that ſhall be found iſſuing not from any poyſon in the nature of the Diſcipline, but rather from the infirmity and corruption of the Perſons (unto whioh, the very beſt Government is ſubject) ſhall be duely regulated and corrected.

And your Petitioners ſhall pray, &c.

Subſcribed by Knights, Eſquires, and Gentlemen of quality, 68. Doctors 8. Miniſters of good repute as will appear by the Originall Petitions, 150. Freeholders and Inhabitants of the County of *Hereford*, 3600.

To the Right Honourable the Lords and Commons Aſſembled in the High-Court of Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, Miniſters, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, within the County of *Cornwall*. Humbly ſhewing,

THat we are no leſs thankful for the many excellent Laws, which by his Majeſties grace and favour, and your care and aſſiduouſneſs, you have obtained for us; then thoſe who have been more forward to preſent you with Petitions; doubting not, but you will welcome this with as hearty acceptance, as you have done any other, it proceeding from loyall hearts to our Soveraign, a tender care of our Proteſtation, and abundance of affection to the Common-wealth, and whereas we underſtand that there is a purpoſe, if not a preſentment already to this honourable Houſe, of a Petition hereof re by ſome Juſtices of the Peace tendred to the grand Inqueſt, at our laſt Aſſizes, to be by them conſidered, whether fit to be preſented to this honourable Houſe, which our deliberate debate was much diſliked, as it was ſaid; but ſince (as we are informed) indirectly intruded upon divers perſons, without reading or peruſal; many of them ſince retracting their opinions, and wiſhing back their hands, and we having reſolved to reſt upon the abilities and care of our Knights and Burgeſſes, our hands and mouths, for matter of particular concernments, yet ſince their abſence from us, and attendance in Parliament, finding and feeling our own grievances, giving us juſt grounds and fear of ſudden miſery, by diſobedience and contempt of Laws; thus provoked with bleeding hearts, we beg the help of your Wiſdomes, to adviſe and apply ſome ſpeedy remedy for theſe felt and feared evils. And for as much as there are lately riſen amongſt us ome few of the Clergy, and many of the Laity, publick contemners and depravers of the Ceremonies and the Service of the Book of Common-prayer, by Law eſtabliſhed, irreverent vilifiers of Gods houſe, and Church Aſſemblies in Prayer times, and generally diſobedient to Eccleſiaſtical Government, of whom many have ſubſcribed or ſubſigned to the repited Petition: Although the ſaid Ceremonies and Book of Common Prayer, are by far the greater and diſcreeter part of our Congregations inoffenſively and reverently received and approved.

1 WE pray (no way preſuming) to preſcribe rules, but ſubmitting to your graver Judgments, that a National Synod of our learned, and approved Clergy, by the reſt to be choſen, may be convened, and ſome Parliamentary courſe ſpeeded, for the ordaining, confirming and eſtabliſhing of the ſaid ervice-Book, and Ceremoni s, or ſome of them, or others not repugnant to Gods word, tending moſt to the peace and purity of our Religion and Church: before which ſettlement, our humble deſires are, that a Parliamentary Declaration, may ſpeedily iſſue forth, for requiring of obedience to the Laws eſtabliſhed.

2. We likewiſe humbly pray the continuance of that ancient and ever reverenced Epiſcopal Government in our Church, & that the Delinquences of any particular perſon, may not cauſe that high & holy office, or calling, to ſuffer.

3. We pray likewiſe that in every Pariſh unprovided, there may be a Preaching Miniſter, and a competent maintenance raiſed for him, and where Improp iations are, and Preaching Miniſters not ſufficiently cared for, allowance may be had or bettered

4. We pray likewiſe that ſuch of our Clergy, as upon enquiry, ſhall be found, either Scandalous or not Orthodox, may be admoniſhed, and bound for the better ſupply and diſcharge of their Cures, or removed.

5. We pray likewiſe, that ſome poſitive Law may be Enacted for Parſons and Vicars recovery of their Tythes, and that ſuch courſe may be taken for the obtaining of them, as may be moſt ſpeedy, and leaſt chargeable; *That ſo thoſe that Miniſter at the Altar, may live by the Altar.*

6. We pray likewiſe, that for the reſtraining and preventing of inordinate licenciouſneſs, there may be ſome penal Law enacted for the puniſhment of Adulteries, and divers other offences not puniſhable by the common Law.

7. As likewiſe, that there may be ſome Coerſive power or Law, ordained for compelling of refractory men to the payment of their rates, and for the reparations of their Pariſh Churches, in which of late ſome are grown very remiſs and backward.

8. We pray likewiſe, that great care may be taken not only for diſarming of Recuſants, but for the Education of their children in the Proteſtant Religion.

9. We likewiſe pray, that ſome ſpeedy courſe may be taken for the Redemption of thoſe woful Chriſtian Captives in *Barbary*, the want of whom, hath occaſioned an extraordinary decay and poverty in our Maritime Towns and Pariſhes, and that our Coaſts may be ſufficiently guarded and ſecured.

10. We likewiſe pray, that whereas this County hath been and is ſurcharged double, at leaſt, with Armies, and very high in Subſidies, much, above our abilities, and the reſpective charge of divers parts of this Kingdome; we may (in conſideration hereof) be relieved in future.

11. We likewiſe pray, that the Sheriffs Turn, now grown an unneceſſary Court, and only uſed to the grievous oppreſſion of the meaner ſort of People, may be ſuppreſſed, and taken away, it being more burdenſome than the Office of the Clerk of the Market formerly hath been,

12. We likewiſe pray, that ſuch Dutchy Tenants, as within our County pay over their rightful Rents and Duties unto the Dutchy Officers, may not be doubly charged by Proces out of the Exchequer, as now they are, by extreme and continual Amercemens.

13. We likewiſe pray, that there may be a reparation of the decay of the Caſtle of S. *Mawes*, and that there may be a ſupply of the want of Ordnances, Carriages, Powder, and Ammunition, in all which, it is extremely defective.

And thus with all humbleneſs, craving pardon for with-holding you from your other mighty affairs, but perſwaded that the cauſe is conſiderable, and may well challenge a part of your thoughts, and be put in action; for the effecting of which, as of all things ſtanding to the Purity and peace of our Church, and Religion, as for the ſafe Defence and Honor of his Majeſty his Royal Poſterity, and Kingdoms; And in theſe, your and our happineſs, as for uniting of his Gracious Majeſty and this Honorable Aſſembly in a mutual conſent and compliancy, as for the unanimous and proſperous proceedings of this Parliament, we do, and ever ſhall, with humble hearts implore Gods gracious aſſiſtance and bleſſing.

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